



## Department of Public Safety

COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE &  
SEXUAL ASSAULT  
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### **TO FOLLOW ARE THE REMARKS OF CDVSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LAUREE MORTON AT THE OPENING OF THE 2014 CHOOSE RESPECT MARCH**

#### Choose Respect March 2014

Thank you for marching; for bearing witness; for standing with us.

Some of you may have marched for a social justice cause before—to end racism, to stop war. Some of you may have participated in Take Back the Night marches. Women out at night walking side by side declaring our right to be safe in the streets after dark—free from the fear of rape.

Many of us have marched in opposition to something, to make a political statement of some sort. That is part of today's march—to say NO MORE, but that is not all it is. Today's march is about accepting a challenge.

Choose Respect. Those two words are deep. Those two words are strong. They demand affirmative action. Choose Respect directs me to value myself, to ensure I have right actions. Choose Respect empowers me to listen to you, to hold you in esteem. Choose Respect causes me to consider how what I do shapes our relationship, causes me to consider

what is in our mutual best interests, and causes me to speak in ways that allows us to grow together not apart.

Choose Respect is not a feel good slogan. Those two words are hard. They demand justice. To choose respect is to struggle with concepts of good and evil, to be a voice for the silenced, to reckon with the consequences of redefining acceptable behavior, equity and what it means to have honor.

To Choose Respect is to be honest and true in our dealings with each other and with ourselves. Those two words take courage.

Choose Respect is possible. Those two words hold promise. They are a glimpse of a better day. Individually, in the privacy of our homes, and collectively, as a community, those two words are in our control- respect is within our reach. At any moment in time, with each thought we have, each action we take, we can choose respect.

Will you accept the challenge? Will we? Will I? As we go our separate ways, think about what Choose Respect looks like for you—how will you Choose Respect—take action this afternoon.

Thank you.